



THE DC VOTER

A Voice for Citizens - A Force for Change

Volume 87, Issue 05

September 2011

President's Message

By Kathryn Ray

Hearty welcome to all of our new members!

To launch the League's focus on the Federal Role in Education, we are pleased to announce that D.C. Public Schools Chancellor **Kaya Henderson**, DC Public Schools will be the featured speaker at our Fall Opening Brunch on **Saturday, September 10**. Please sign up! A flyer with all the details is enclosed. You can also download the form from our website: lwvdc.org - look under "Highlights" on the homepage or click on "Calendar."

As part of the LWVUS study on the Federal Role in Education, we will be asked to reach consensus in November. The questions are included in this issue. The study documents are on the LWVUS website. Here is the link: http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public_Education&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=112&ContentID=16956

The Health Committee, headed by **Goody Braun**, has been very busy organizing a

panel of experts to address the issue of HIV/AIDs here in D.C. Plan to attend the September 27 evening program and learn what you can do to help. For details see page 4 of this newsletter or visit our website, lwvdc.org, under "**Highlights**" and also "**Calendar**."

Practice your best smile because the LWVDC is producing a pictorial directory and we want you in it. After a very successful experience with **Thomas Circle's directory**, our 1st VP **Jack Mathison** is coordinating with LifeTouch Studios to produce a directory for the League. We want everyone to participate. There is no charge to the League nor to the members who participate. Each member will receive a complimentary copy of the directory. Portrait appointments will be available **Oct. 7, 8, & 10**. Jack arranged for the use of the auditorium at Thomas Circle, 1330 Mass. Ave. NW.

In League,
Kathryn Ray

LWVDC MEMBERSHIP FORM

2011

The date of renewal for all memberships is March 31 of each year. For questions about membership please call the League office at 222-0710.

Annual Dues Rate

\$45 individual _____ \$60 Joint Household _____

Make check payable to LWVDC

For a small handling charge, you may also join or renew online at www.lwvdc.org.

(Please print)

Name

Street Address

Apt. No.

City

State zip code

telephone

email address

In addition to my dues, I enclose a contribution to:
LWVDC Education Fund (tax deductible) \$ _____
LWVDC General Fund (non-deductible) \$ _____

Please write separate checks for each.

Send membership form and check(s) to:
LWVDC, 1100 Fifteenth Street NW, 11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Affiliation with the national League is included in your LWVDC dues. You become part of important work throughout the United States. Keep up with the work you support and news of LWV US at www.lwv.org

You also become part of a regional network with Leagues throughout Maryland and Virginia LWV-NCA (National Capitol Area) www.lwvnca.org



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Nigeria NTA-TV Journalist Interviews League Board Members

Under a US State Department Grant, Journalist **Stella Chinwuba**, and Cameraman **Lamido Tafida** came to the LWVDC office to interview **Kathryn Ray, Jonathan Talbot and Melody Webb** for a series of programs to be shown

nationally in Nigeria focusing on how various organizations, NGO's, and other interest groups motivate voters to vote, and also how they keep an eye on government so that it is responsive to the voters, and reduces corruption.

League Weighs in on Council's Gun Sale Proposal

Subsequent to the League's phone calls and email messages, the Council decided not to enact emergency legislation to use DC Government offices and employees to facilitate **gun purchases**. Here is the League's message...

Dear Councilmembers,

The League of Women Voters of D.C. (LWVDC) maintains that it is not the government's responsibility to facilitate gun purchases in any way, nor

to act as a business with a Federal Firearms License (FFL) when private industry fails to do so.

LWVDC is on record advocating strong controls on the sale of firearms, particularly hand guns. While we understand the ramifications of recent court decisions regarding the gun control laws of D.C., we oppose any governmental involvement with the sale of firearms to the public. It is not an appropriate use of District personnel, government facilities, nor taxpayers' dollars.

*Sincerely,
Kathryn C. Ray
President LWVDC*

SMILE! It's Time for LWVDC's Pictorial Directory

Check your calendars. LifeTouch Studios will be at the Residences at Thomas Circle (1330 Massachusetts Ave, NW) On Friday, October 7, 3-8:30PM; Saturday October 8 10AM- 3 PM; and Monday October 10 from 12-6.

Soon there will be a link on our website to reserve your portrait time. For those who do not use the Internet, please contact **Jack Mathison** at 362-4612 for information on

how to reserve your time.

LifeTouch professional photographers will take individual or family portraits and produce a high quality, full color membership directory for each of us at no cost to members or the League.

We would like all of our members to be in our directory. Jack Mathison can answer your questions. Please contact him at 362-4612 or at jmathison1@earthlink.net

HIV/AIDS Health Forum

Join us for an HIV/AIDS forum sponsored by LWVDC in association with The Women's Collective, Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association and Whitman-Walker Health.

*What Are We Doing About the
HIV/AIDS Epidemic in DC?*

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

Frank D. Reeves Center
2000 14th Street NW
Washington DC

6:30pm—9:00pm

Light refreshments will be provided.

For more information, call the League of Women Voters of DC at 202-222-0710 or email lwvdc@aol.com

LWVDC Annual Brunch

Reserve your space today! LWVDC's Annual Brunch is Saturday, September 10 at Clyde's of Gallery Place. Registration begins at 10:30am and the program runs from 11am to 1pm. Our guest speaker will be DC Public School Chancellor Kaya Henderson.

Reservations must be received by 5pm, Friday, September 2.

Please see the enclosed flyer for a registration form. You may also download a form from www.lwvdc.org or call the LWVDC office at 202-222-0710 to reserve your place.

The Clean Air Promise

Decades ago, the LWVUS, assumed a leadership role in enacting, improving and protecting the Clean Air Act. The League is now dedicated to re-framing the debate about the air we breathe. For **too long, the focus was on "overregulation" and featured false assertions that environmental protections hurt our economy. The "Clean Air Promise" is an issue campaign aimed at changing the debate over the Clean Air Act to one focused on protecting public health.** By unifying our message to one on public health – one that encompasses all the key issues from smog to toxics to carbon pollution – we can win this debate and stop politicians from destroying the Clean Air Act. Throughout this effort, there will be broad public and media outreach to be sure that everyone understands our commitment to protecting the public health

and clean air. For more information visit the website <http://www.peoplenotpolluters.org>

The Promise

I Promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.

Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths,

I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.

LWVUS National Study on the Federal Role in Education

This November, we will take part in the LWVUS national study on the Federal Role in Education. In preparation for this study, LWVDC will be holding a **General Meeting** on October 5, 12:15pm. Bring your lunch to the League office and learn about the League's consensus process. Materials and study guides prepared by LWVUS will be reviewed and discussed in preparation for the October and November Unit meetings. Below are the consensus questions and additional **background materials** are available on the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org. (From the homepage, click on blue "For Members" tab, select "Projects & Programs", then click on Task Forces & Studies)

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS:

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is

Much too small too small about right too large much too large

2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)

- To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.*
- To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.*
- To mandate Common Core Standards for*

all students K-12.

- To monitor state efforts for funding*
- To measure teacher effectiveness through test data.*

3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.

Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (Choose one)

- Special grant programs such as Race to the Top*
- All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding.*
- All programs receiving federal funding from any source*
- All of the above*
- None of the above*

5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?

Yes No

If Yes, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? (choose one)

- Voluntary*
- Mandated*
- Mandated, if fully funded*

National Study, continued from previous page

If No, what other accountability measures might you suggest? (choose one)

- a. *Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.*
 - b. *Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the Stanford Achievement Test or Iowa Test of Basic Skills.*
 - c. *Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically*
6. National standards should lead to: (choose one)
- a. *A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.*
 - b. *A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.*
 - c. *A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.*
 - d. *No national curriculum.*
7. What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (Rank order)
- a. *Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.*
 - b. *Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.*
 - c. *Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.*
 - d. *Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.*
 - e. *Provide diagnostic information on each child.*
8. Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (choose one)
- a. ***Data should be “norm referenced” (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.***
 - b. ***Data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.***
 - c. ***Data should be used to determine “cut” scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade levels.***
9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to (Choose one):
- a. *Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels*
 - b. *Reward schools that achieve high scores*
 - c. *Rank teachers based on student test score data*
 - d. *Reward teachers who have exemplary scores*
 - e. *Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.*

Continued on next page

National Study, continued from previous page

10. In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any Schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (choose one)

- a. *Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements*
- b. *A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants*
- c. *Competitive grants only*
- d. *No federal funding*

11. If the federal government's role is the concern of the "common good" then:

(Choose one)

- a. *Mandates only should be sanctioned.*
- b. *Mandates and funding should both be provided.*
- c. *Funding should be provided through grants only.*
- d. *A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.*
- e. *No mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available.*

12. Equity in public education means equitable access to: (Rank order)

- a. *high quality teaching/learning*
- b. *adequate and current learning materials*

- c. *clean and well maintained physical facilities*
- d. *food and health care*
- e. *safe and secure neighborhoods*
- f. *secure housing*

13. Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered "categorical" rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

14. The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children?

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

15. Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g. Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed.

- a. *Strongly Agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly Disagree*
- b. *This funding should be extended to :
All children
Only those with special needs
Special needs first*

We're on Facebook!
Be our "Friend" and "Like" us!

Facebook is not just for teenagers

Get the latest news about LWVDC by joining
facebook.com

Our page is "League of Women Voters of
Washington DC"

Hope that you will "like" us on Facebook.com

Not sure exactly what this means? If you
have Internet access, you can go to
www.facebook.com and sign up.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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League of Women Voters of Washington DC*

CALENDAR

Reserve Your Spot Now for the Annual Brunch: September 10, 2011

Fall Focus on Education with featured speaker,
Schools Chancellor **Kaya Henderson**

Plan to attend and bring your friends to the League's Annual Fall Brunch featuring DC School Chancellor Kaya Henderson. The opening event for the program year will be held Saturday, September 10, 2011 at Clyde's of Gallery Place. Watch the September *DC Voter* for a reservation form and details, or visit the website www.lwvdc.org. Ms. Henderson's talk will be the kick off for the League's National study of The Federal Role in Education.

September 7, 2011 (Wednesday)

Monthly Board Meeting
9:45am
LWVDC office

September 13, 2011 (Tuesday)

New Voter Registration
10am-12pm
US District Courthouse
300 Constitution Ave. NW, 6th Floor
*Please email lwvdc@aol.com if you are interested
in helping.*

September 27, 2011

HIV/AIDS Forum
6:30pm -9:00pm
(see page 4 for details)

Coming in October:

Unit meetings will resume, details in next Voter.

October 7, 8 & 10, Directory sessions, see page 3.

The DC VOTER is a publication of the League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia, a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.